NIST Measurements, Standards, Data and Technology R&D Strategic Planning and Visioning Technical Event Support

This is a SOURCES SOUGHT NOTICE for market research purposes. THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS OR A REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is conducting market research in the form of a sources sought notice to obtain information regarding the availability and capability of all qualified sources to perform a potential requirement.

NIST recognizes the value of consultations with stakeholders that are relevant to its mission and to the public interest. Stakeholder engagements permit individuals and organizations to engage in a variety of activities that are critical to the development and implementation of NIST programs and play an important role in fulfilling NIST's mission. NIST's main campus is in Gaithersburg, Maryland (MD). NIST has a second campus in Boulder, Colorado (CO) and additional, jointly operated research organizations in Boulder, CO, Rockville, MD, College Park MD, and Charleston, South Carolina (SC). NIST leverages the nation's best experts in a wide range of science and technology fields through joint institutes and centers at various locations across the country.

Stakeholder engagements via technical events are an effective way to bring together various groups of people to share information, educate the scientific community and the public, work with state and local government partners, and/or learn from non-governmental stakeholders. Technical events are routinely in the form of conferences, meetings, workshops, symposia or colloquia, which take place in plenary or multiple program or working group sessions over single or multiple days.

The Government intends to award one or more indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts to provide services for the design, organization, planning, execution and facilitation of technical events, as well as event reporting or post-event strategic analyses, as described below.

The anticipated contracts shall NOT support the management of event logistics or venue arrangements, such as travel, lodging and meal arrangements, or registration. It is anticipated that work under this IDIQ shall require coordination with the NIST Conference Program, the NIST Contracting Officer's Representative, and NIST staff, as applicable.

Work under the anticipated contracts is expected to include all of the following:

a. Scope, examine, deliberate, debate, or communicate legacy, current or emerging research and development (R&D) landscapes in technical fields in the following technological areas, noting selected technological focus areas may also be cross-disciplinary and include subsets of more than one of these areas:
    -Chemical, physical, biological, and materials sciences, technologies;
    -Engineering;
    -Manufacturing, construction and physical infrastructure;
    -Communications;
    -Information technology and engineering; and
    -Science and technology policy; standards development; technology partnerships; technology transfer).

b. Enable the exchange of ideas in NIST-defined R&D topical areas and render opportunities to establish collaborations between NIST and other parties to understand, examine or advance measurement science, standards, technology, and data, including scientific and technical information and data resources, mathematics, and statistics;

c. Examine or advance NIST R&D program development or planning;

d. Enable interaction and engagement between NIST and domestic and international entities in the academic, industrial, non-profit, and government sectors before, during and after events;

e. Enable interaction and engagement between NIST and early or senior career scientists or students from the technical and scientific R&D public and private sectors relevant to the topical area for an event; and/or

f. Provide NIST with key data, information, R&D program development, planning or evaluation;

g. Conduct activities in advance of an event or at an event, such as scientific analysis, scientific or technical surveying, state-of-the-science assessment; training, education, outreach, peer review, risk assessment, economic, policy or regulatory analyses, performance assessment, data evaluation or management, or strategic management or planning exercises;

h. Suggest, from an event theme or current and potential future strategic directions for NIST, opportunities for developing strategic collaborative relationships between NIST and non-NIST entities, and key technological growth areas and key challenges and barriers to achieve progress in these growth areas, as applicable;

i. Technical events may be in the form of open meetings, charting, public involvement, and reporting using federal advisory committees. The Contractor must possess the capability to design, organize, plan, execute and facilitate technical events that involve federal advisory committees. The Contractor must also be familiar with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (Public Law 92-463, as amended). It is required that advisory committees provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public, act promptly to complete their work; and comply with reasonable cost controls and record keeping requirements.

j. Work under the intended contracts anticipate that Contractors will have access to personally identifiable information (PII), such as names, affiliations, and contact information for event attendees, that will be transmitted and stored electronically, and/or NIST-owned data that has been assigned a low and/or moderate risk by the Department of Commerce

   The Contractor must, ultimately, possess an authorized FedRAMP security and privacy controls package at low and moderate levels, **or** FedRAMP authorization, or Authorization to Operate (ATO) letter issued by a Federal Government agency at low and moderate levels, as proof of evidence that the Contractor has been assessed and authorized at the low and moderate levels. If using an ATO letter, that letter shall clearly assert the risk level at which the Contractor has been authorized.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

NIST is seeking responses from all responsible sources. Small businesses are defined under the associated NAICS code for this effort, 541690 (Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services), as those domestic sources having annual revenues of $15.0M or less. Please include your company's size classification in any response to this notice.

After the results of this market research are obtained and analyzed, NIST may conduct a competitive procurement and subsequently award one or more contracts. If at least two qualified small business are identified during this market research stage, then any competitive procurement that results would be anticipated to be conducted as a small business set-aside.

Submission must not exceed a total of 20 pages, single sided, single-spaced.

Submissions must be received not later than Monday, May 8, 2017, at 3:30 PM Eastern Time. Email submissions are acceptable.

The following information is required to be provided as part of the response to this sources sought notice:

1. Name and business size of the company.

2. Documentation as to whether the company currently possess FEDRAMP or ATO certification from any Government Agency and the associated risk level. This requirement also applies to all subcontractors with whom you would consider working;

   In lieu of the above, the Contractor and its intended subcontractors, may demonstrate that they have passed an independent security audit (e.g. Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements (SSAE), PCI Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)). The Contractor shall provide to NIST, a description of the audit(s) performed, evidence of the audit(s), or instructions on how to obtain evidence of the above, if the Contractor has had any audits described above or another security audit;

3. Relevant documentation which demonstrates your company's overall capability to complete tasks associated with designing, organizing, planning, executing and facilitating technical events, as well as the reporting of events, for events of any size of attendees.

4. Documentation of the company's expertise in the areas of chemical, physical, biological, and materials sciences, technologies; engineering; manufacturing, construction and physical infrastructure; communications; information technology and engineering; and science and technology policy; standards development; technology partnerships; AND technology transfer.

5. Documentation of the company's capabilities in the areas of subject matter analysis, implementation and reporting, opportunities document development and in-depth analytical strategic, and project management as they apply to tasks associated with designing, organizing, planning, executing and facilitating technical events, as well as the reporting of events, for events of any size of attendees.

6. Documentation of the company's experience:
   a. Delivering to the federal, private, or public sector innovative approaches to achieving strategic and objective goals within engineering, technology and science disciplines;
   b. Developing strategic plans, technology roadmaps, and technology assessments; and
   c. Leading technical meetings and events of various sizes, including small (less than 50 attendees); medium (more than 50 but less than 200 attendees) and/or large (more than 200 attendees) event, within the federal, private, and/or public sectors both domestically and internationally.

7. The Contractors network and available personnel resources in all of the following areas:
   a. Program Manager(s) with Bachelor's Degree or higher in science, technology, engineering, and/or math technical discipline;
   b. Technical experts in the science, technology, engineering, math and technical discipline;

c. Facilitation Manager; and
d. Technical writers/editors in the science, technology, engineering, math, and technical disciplines.

8. Any other relevant information that is not listed above which the Government should consider in finalizing its market research.

DEFINITIONS

Event Design:

Developing materials and key documents to be used for an event, if applicable. This could include:

a) Conducting pre-event discussions via teleconferences, video meetings, or in person meetings with NIST program leadership and staff and relevant stakeholders to define, create, or refine ideas for an event's goals, processes, and outcomes.
b) Researching the literature and other key sources of information in the public, private and academic sectors to develop a cohesive summary of the current state of the science and condition for an event's topical area;
c) Contacting technological experts in the field, if applicable, to determine key questions and challenges within one or more topical areas relevant to an event;
d) Providing information on current and emerging legislative and policy issues, events and/or actions and assess potential impacts of these on an event's topical area mission, mandates, values, structure, processes, and management; and
e) Developing a document which summarizes the above information and providing this to NIST and any event-collaborative parties, if applicable as determined by NIST, and use this document to design, organize, plan, execute and facilitate a relevant technical event for NIST.

Event Organization and Planning:

a) Establish the goals and objectives of an event
b) Establish the intended audience;
c) Define an overall project timeline and appropriate milestones to meet an event's goals;
d) Provide guidance to NIST and any event-collaborative entities on the development of an event's agenda, structure, format, and reporting options to best obtain the desired event outcomes;
e) Set the structure and layout of an event for plenary or breakout sessions or other appropriate set-ups to achieve the necessary interactions between NIST and any event–collaborative parties, and include the design of networking or social events, as applicable, to meet an event's goals;
f) Design approaches to meet an event's goals, such as interactive exercises or focus groups for attendees;
g) Develop potential participant lists or subject matter expert lists;
h) Develop invitations, meeting flyers, and related materials that may be distributed by NIST;
i) Prepare pertinent materials for an event, such as materials for distribution at an event. Examples are the agenda, literature or references, technical instructions or processes for attendees;

Event Execution and Facilitation:

During an event:

a) Solicit input from attendees and conduct in-depth analyses to:
   i) Scope, examine, deliberate, debate or communicate legacy, current or emerging Research and Development (R&D) landscapes in technical fields relevant to an event;
   ii) Promote the exchange of ideas and render opportunities to establish connections or collaborations between NIST and other parties to understand, evaluate or advance a technical field relevant to an event;
b) Provide professional staff to:
   i) guide technical sessions to develop the event's desired outcomes;
   ii) develop focused analyses, as applicable, of an event's key issues;

c) Provide meeting supplies such as name tents, facilitation materials (markers and easels, and supplies necessary to document results during the event).

Event Reporting:
Developing and printing, as applicable, technical and science communications, herein referred to as communications, that will be available for public distribution. Communications may be in the form of paper or electronic documents, including but not limited to, white papers, reports, book chapters, whole books, brochures, technical summaries, or any other form of publication, including publications in newsprint, magazines or technical newsletters, and/or publications in peer or non-peer reviewed technical journals. Communications may also be in the form of videos, web pages, web applications, or databases. Communications may include:

i) Information and results from an event;
ii) Key summaries of the current state of a technical field and the vision for the future;
iii) Summaries of the presentations and any sessions, including breakout sessions, which may include the analysis of data from subject matter experts attending and speaking at an event;
iv) Integration of the pre-event report material;
v) Documentation of needs and directions for collaborative opportunities between NIST and any event-collaborative entities;
vi) Summaries of technical themes, project or enterprise management, or possible scenario planning and technology roadmaps; and
vii) Coordination between NIST, event-collaborative entities, and attendees to develop and finalize communications and include, when applicable, coordination of a comment and review period.

Post-event Strategic Analyses:
Providing a post-event in-depth analysis of the pre-event material integrated with the science and technology themes captured in the summary reporting and event documents that are developed. This could include working with NIST, event-collaborative entities or attendees from an event for the provision of:

a) Written reports with sufficient details on the topical area of the event, such as technological advances, barriers to advances, measurements, standards, technology, and data gaps, or relevant policy issues for decision-making purposes for strategic planning;
b) Recommendations themed from the event on the design, development, implementation and management of NIST technical projects, programs, or enterprises;
c) Novel databases or organizational and analytical tools to document strategic scenarios, the rationale for technology roadmaps, or approaches for scientific and technological research and enterprise development; and/or
d) Recommendations for legacy, current, or emerging science, technology, or business environments for effective strategic planning and program management for NIST.

R&D landscapes: the scene or situation of R&D activities in a particular area of interest or relevance to NIST.

R&D topical areas: R&D areas of interest or relevance to NIST that have a particular name that could refer to a single named R&D area or a themed R&D area. For example cell biology is a single named topical area covering all areas of research related to the cell, animal or plant; whereas marine biology is a themed topical area covering all areas of biology related to the marine environment, for example any biology within the oceans, estuaries, or sediments or any biology related to plants or animals, indigenous or nonnative, in these environments.

R&D program development: the development of R&D programs or the processes to develop R&D programs.

ACRONYMS
ATO: Authorization to operate
CO: Colorado
FedRAMP: Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program; https://www.fedramp.gov/
IDIQ: Indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity
MD: Maryland
NIST: National Institute of Standards and Technology
PII: Personally identifiable information
R&D: Research and development
SC: South Carolina